**Sun Protection Policy**

**Rationale**

To ensure all tamariki attending Country Kidz are protected from the sun’s Ultraviolet (UV) rays, which cause sunburn, skin damage, and increase the risk of skin cancer.

**Objective**

To provide appropriate measures to ensure tamariki are protected from the sun’s harmful rays annually between September and April. To recognise the importance of having a balance between increasing the risk of skin cancer and getting enough sun exposure for tamariki to maintain adequate levels of vitamin D.

**Policy**

Country Kidz values the opportunity for tamariki to have extended periods of play and exploration in its outside environment to create wonder and learning moments. Enjoying the outdoors is an integral part of the early childhood education experience and very much part of the Country Kidz philosophy. The risks associated with exposure to the sun can be significant and, as such, need to be managed so that play and learning outdoors can occur safely.

There is no legislative requirement to ensure sun protection in an early learning environment, but it is covered by the general obligations to promote health and safety and keep tamariki from harm (HS27). Providing opportunities for tamariki to explore the outside environment, therefore, necessitates a policy with regards to ensuring against long unprotected exposure to the sun for our tamariki. Tamariki undertaking play and exploration outside in direct sunlight during the times when the UV Index is 3 or above are at significant risk of sunburn, overheating, sunstroke, and/or dehydration.

**Implementation**

Country Kidz provides whānau awareness to sun protection in a number of ways, including, but not limited to, at enrolment where the Sun Protection Policy is included in the packet provided to whānau, general conversations with whānau during transition times, and through newsletters, and on noticeboards.

Country Kidz provides sunscreen to whānau at the entrance gate to ensure all tamariki are protected prior to commencing their day in our learning environment. Country Kidz also provides SPF 30+ broad spectrum sunscreen for our tamariki to use and be re-applied throughout the day. Should whānau wish to provide an alternative to the sunscreen provided, this will be used for their tamariki only during times of reapplication. Sunscreen applications are used as opportune learning moments to teach tamariki about the importance of being sun safe not only with sunscreen but also ensuring their pōtae is on whenever they are outside. The wearing of pōtae is mandatory during the Summer months in our learning space when outside and this will be monitored by kaiako.

Wearing appropriate clothing that encourages the coverage of shoulders and arms is encouraged by Country Kidz. If kaiako believe tamariki are being unduly exposed to the harmful effects of the sun, they can redirect tamariki to safe areas where exploration and play can continue. Kaiako will use positive reinforcement during these occasions to ensure the health and safety of tamariki is maintained.

**Hydration for Protection Against Dehydration**

Country Kidz provides drinking water for hydration, and this is always available and accessible to tamariki. Drinking vessels can be provided by whānau to also assist with enabling tamariki to self-serve their hydration needs. Kaiako provide regular reminders to tamariki throughout the day with regards to hydration.

*Aligns with:*

*Licensing criteria for centre-based ECE services 2008 (amended, September 2022)*

*Country Kidz Accident and Illness Policy*

*Country Kidz Health and Safety*

*Country Kidz Excursion Policy*

*Country Kidz Nutrition and Food Safety Policy*

*New Zealand Cancer Society*

*Our code, our standards – Code of professional responsibility and standards for the Teaching Profession*

**Review**

Review when there is a significant change to legislature or as part of the annual management plan.

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| **Authorised:** |  |
| **Date:** | December, 2024 |
| **Next Review:** | Add to Annual Management Plan for September, 2025 not withstanding a change in legislation or criteria |